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Free thinkers*

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



OTTO WETTSTEIN,

President of Materialist Association and Free Thought Writer.

## THREE GENERATIONS WITH OTTO I, OTTO II AND OTTO III

## Otto Wettstein

Though not gifted with the flower and rhetoric of oratory, but culling from the fields of intellectual thought, rich and rare argument against the popular and orthodox delusions of the day, the subject of this sketch has made his name as widely known on the American continent as that of any Freethinker during the past and present century.

Every reader of the Freethought press, no matter where published or distributed; and many others who do not claim to be of Liberal thought, are more or less familiar with the name of Otto Wettstein, designer and builder of the handsome and attractive Freethought badge, the Ingersoll souvenir spoon and many other Freethought trinkets of beauty and value. His contributions to the Liberal press of the country, whereat he has shown marked ability, have won for him the proud and envious distinction of being the "Father of Materialism in America" while his clear and lucid reasoning has taken all the gods, ghosts and spooks out of the universe and relegated them to the realm of fiction and allegory where they properly belong.

Otto Wettstein was born in Barmen, Elberfeld, Prussia, on the 7th day of April, 1838, and is now, therefore, past his seventieth year. He came into the world with an abnormally large head and the physicians in attendance pronounced a dropsical brain, predicting that the babe could not possibly live. Other physicians were consulted by the anxious parents and some of these held out hopes of life and possible longevity, provided, the child could be carried up to his fourteenth year. Our Otto is still in the land of the living, as the orthodox have well discovered, and with a supply of energy and good health he appears to be good for some years yet to come before being called upon to surrender his lease upon life.

As a child, young Wettstein was always awkward and backward. This was applicable to both physical and mental development. He was "top-heavy" and this made him the sport of his playmates until he had reached his 12th year, when he began to command their admiration by reason of the superior mental qualities he now began to manifest. His father, Theodore Wettstein, was a prosperous merchant, but failed in business in 1848 and with his wife and family of six children he emigrated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he soon became a prosperous and popular hotel proprietor. His father also became the founder of the

Milwaukee Musical Society. Determined that each of his sons should learn a trade he shipped Otto, at 12 years of age to a friend in Chicago there to learn the jeweler's art for which the lad got only board and bed. His education in this profession, however, was both systematic and thorough which included the making of every part of the different kinds of watches then in vogue, by hand.

In 1856 his period of apprenticeship came to an end and his employer engaged his services for another year while he was touring Europe. At the end of that time a panic came upon the country and Otto moved to Rochelle, Ill., in 1857, landing there with a kit of tools, a trunk full of books, his clothing and four dollars, which constituted all his possessions and effects. A board in the front of a farmer's supply store furnished him with a workbench and here he plodded faithfully and long until the panic overwhelmed the storekeeper and Otto was out on the street again. A little later and he had managed to buy a small building, only 8 feet by ten feet, where he set up shop on his own account, gradually adding to his stock of art and fancy goods and success dawned upon him. He soon rented the largest store the city of Rochelle could boast and an era of prosperity was now at hand.

During his apprenticeship, upon the urgent request of his mother, Otto was confirmed in the old school Lutheran faith. Not until after he had reached manhood's estate did Otto come in contact with any liberal publication, when a friend placed in his hands a copy of the old Boston investigator, made famous by Horace Seaver, J. P. Mendum, Ernest Mendum, L. K. Washburn and others. Prior to this hour his mind was almost a blank upon matters of advanced thought, with no mental development. The ice was now broken, however, for an intense desire for knowledge now took possession of him. He bought books. Works of science and poetry came into his hands. He worked by day and studied by night. He wanted to know all that could be known. He plunged into the natural sciences and finally became sceptical about the bible stories. He realized that the proven facts of science did not harmonize with gods and ghosts, heavens and hells and that spirits were impossible in nature. He knew nothing, or little, concerning the rules of grammar, less about mathematics, but with keen reasoning powers, he plunged into the discussions upon naturalism from time to

time. He also wrote for Rochelle and Chicago papers and the force of this logic and argument redeemed his lack of higher education. He was now an out spoken, fearless, aggressive and uncompromising materialist. The editor of the Rochelle Register, agreeing with Wettstein in his views, offered him the columns of that paper for an elucidation of those views and Otto took advantage thereof. He discussed the issues of Rationalism with both laymen and preachers. He succeeded in making both converts and enemies. Following their usual custom in such cases the Christian people worked a boycott upon him with the evident purpose of breaking him up and ruining him in a business way. They withdrew their own patronage and urged others to do likewise. Otto realized what this meant. He refused to retract an inch of his ground. He now resolved to fight it out and he succeeded in making a partial recovery for these business losses by turning to the Liberal of America for their custom. This came, but slow and uncertain. Protracted hard times set in and Otto failed in business, lost his store, stock and even his home. His two sons came to his rescue and now he finds himself established in a snug home, den and office, owned by them, in the beautiful Chicago suburb of La Grange, within thirty minutes of the city.

The family of Otto consists of his wife and their three sons, F. E. Wettstein, of Cleveland, Ohio; Otto Wettstein, Jr., a successful telephone contractor; and Bryant Emerson Wettstein, who will cast his first vote in November of this year. While still in the church Otto became a Mason and an Odd Fellow, to which organizations he still belongs. His sons are all prosperous and successful, honored by all who them, a delight to their parents, though Frank, the eldest has sought in vain to convert his father to a belief in Christ.

In 1888 Otto designed the well known Freethought badge which is made to represent the evolution of the world from the darkness and midnight of superstition to the light of science and reason. Later came the Ingersoll spoon. Both are made by the best workmen obtainable, of enduring material and are of beautiful design.

At the recent Materialist Association convention held at Canal Dover, Ohio, he was elected by unanimous vote as the President thereof and he delivered the magnificent address which the Blade publishes in this issue.

# The Ax to the Root

## or A God Impossible in Nature

Brilliant Array of Facts and Authorities  
Against the God Idea Given in an  
Address Before Materialist As-  
sociation Convention, at Canai  
Dever, Ohio, Sept. 7,  
1908.

(By Otto Wettstein, President.)

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:  
I trust the logic, force and originality of  
my argument may compensate you for its  
prosaic delivery.

Permit me, first, to present a few sen-  
timents which will be admirable in lieu of  
a text, and indicate the aims and mission  
of the Materialist Association.

Dr. Paul Carus:—"New truths appear at  
first sight always appalling. They come to  
destroy the errors which we have accus-  
tomed ourselves to cherish as truths. Thus  
the truth naturally appears as destructive.  
But look at the truth closer, and you will  
find that it is after all better and greater  
and nobler than the most beautiful fiction  
woven of errors."

Emerson:—"The new church will be  
founded on moral science. Poets, artists,  
musicians, philosophers, will be its teachers.  
The noblest literature of the world will  
be its bible. Love and labor its sacraments  
—and instead of worshipping one saviour,  
we will gladly build an altar in the heart  
of every one who has suffered for human-  
ity."

Mangasarlian:—"Science is the real Sav-  
ior because it helps us to know ourselves  
and our world. By its help Humanity,  
dust-begrimed and darkened, shall become  
radiant. Under its benign reign race and  
religious castes and class prejudices shall  
vanish. To a world torn and bleeding with  
religious wrangles, and worn to the bone  
by barren speculations about gods, ghosts  
and the 'Hereafter,' Science brings the  
olive branch of peace. Knowledge, trans-  
lated into love, reverence, justice, beauty,  
shall surely change the world's night into  
day."

Dr. Bowles:—"Scientific Knowledge or an  
acquaintance with the different departments  
of nature, organic and inorganic, is a com-  
plete and perfect antidote for every form of  
superstition."

Grant Allen:—"It is our duty to make  
ourselves acquainted with the universe  
around us, to know what is known of sun,  
moon, planets, stars and nebular. It is  
our duty to search and probe into all things,  
taking nothing for granted, accepting noth-  
ing on authority, testing all we are told

by teacher or preacher, by priest or sa-  
vant."

Haeckle:—"The older view of idealistic  
dualism (God and nature) is breaking up  
with all its mystic dogmas, but upon the  
vast field of ruins, majestic and brilliant,  
the new sun of our realistic monism (ma-  
terialism or natureism), which reveals to  
us the wonderful temple of nature, in all  
its beauty. In the sincere cult of the true,  
the good and the beautiful, which is the  
heart of our new monistic religion, we find  
ample compensation for this anthropistic  
ideals of God, free will and immortality,  
which we have lost."

John Wesley:—"The father of Method-  
ism) "After all that has been so plausibly  
written concerning the innate idea of God;  
after all that has been said of its being  
common to all men, in all ages and nations,  
it does not appear that man has naturally  
any more idea of God than any of the  
beasts of the field; he has no Knowledge  
of God at all. Whatever change may after-  
ward be wrought by his own reflection, he  
is by nature, a mere atheist."

James A. Greenhill:—"Our late old and  
faithful comrade, skilled artisan, Astrono-  
mer and regular and enthusiastic attendant  
of our freethought conventions). "The  
scientist must be free from guess work. He  
cares not for belief, personal preferences  
or sentiment. He wants Knowledge. He  
asks you to investigate and if you doubt  
him you do not have to go to hell. And if  
you did go, he wouldn't know where to  
find you."

Buckle's "History of Civilization":—"The  
duty of a philosopher is clear. His path  
lies straight before him. He must take  
every pains to ascertain the truth, and  
having arrived at a conclusion, he, instead  
of shrinking from it because it is unpalat-  
able or because it seems dangerous, should  
on that very account, cling the closer to  
it; should uphold it in bad repute more  
zealously than he would have done in good  
repute; should noise it abroad far and wide,  
utterly regardless what opinions he shocks,  
of what interests he imperils; should on  
its behalf court hospitality and persecution  
being well assured that if it is not true  
it will die, but that if it is true it must  
produce ultimate benefit, albeit unsuited for  
practical adoption by the age or country  
in which it is first propounded."

Huxley:—"The church no longer affords  
room for self-respecting scholars, and the  
next few years will see an exodus of them  
from its pale."

Rev. R. Heber Newton:—"Reason must  
be the rock-bed of our faith."

Rev. Dr. Thomas:—"We must permit not  
even God to come between us and Reason."

Conforming to the admonitions of all  
these great and good men many of them  
devout Christians, I will now endeavor to  
show you why any religion that conflicts  
with the well established facts of nature  
should be rejected.

In lieu of a thousand antagonistic reli-  
gions, all alike based on myth and miracle,  
we present to you a philosophy of truths  
and facts that will eventually unite in one  
great harmonious and fraternal family the  
human race. It will be as invulnerable as  
mathematics and yet so simple that a child  
can understand it. It will be based on  
every fact of nature, on all the empirical  
sciences, comprising the greatest science  
of all sciences, Materialism. With Tyndall  
it finds in matter (chemism) the promise  
and potencies of all life. He said:

"The notion of an atom manufacturer  
and artificer of souls, raises the doubt  
whether those who entertain it were ever  
really penetrated by the solemnity of the  
problem for which they offer such a solu-  
tion."

And with Shelley it finds a correct moral  
law in right living:

"When Reason's voice,"

Loud as the voice of Nature, shall have  
waked

The Nations, and mankind perceive that  
vice

Is discord, war and misery; that virtue

Is peace and happiness and harmony

When man's maturer nature shall disdain  
The play things of its childhood; Kingly  
glare

Shall lose its power to dazzle; its authority

Shall silently pass by: the gorgeous throne

Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall

Fast falling to decay; whilst falsehood's  
trade

Shall be as unprofitable as that of truth is  
now."

Astronomy Proves There are no Gods.

When Galileo invented the telescope he  
unwittingly produced the grand factor of  
civilization destined not only to reveal to  
the world the superlative glory of infinite  
nature but also to banish eventually all  
the gods, devils and lesser spooks from the  
universe. Theories over which the world  
has been divided to bitterness and blood-  
shed shall vanish, and facts and truths,  
conceded by all nations and races alike,



will bring the peace and happiness of a civilization we all hope for.

It was natural and so easy in the days of the cave-men, when their chief or fakir was called upon to explain the mysteries surrounding them, to people the air with an almighty spook to explain all they did not understand. All primitive races, being alike ignorant, all naturally solved the problem in similar manner. Nobody had been "up there in the sky," nobody could know, nobody could deny or had a better explanation. Densest ignorance concerning the natural operations of nature and the potentiality of matter prevailed.

If the God-myths had not originated then and been taught and promulgated by scheming charlatans as authoritative law and gospel, intelligent people would have no Gods today. The revelations of science and of our giant telescopes, sweeping from mountain tops in every portion of the world through boundless expanse, have removed the dense web of mystery enshrouding nature and revealed the same to us in all its stupendous vastness and bewildering reality, making all god-myths appear not only childish and absurd, but such beings absolutely impossible in the realms of nature.

Atheism originated when this hypothesis was considered a logical necessity to explain nature and life. Now, when we know that all phenomena are the necessary result and spontaneous product of Nature's own constituents, the idea must be abandoned—the need of a God gone, the idea explodes.

#### The Revelations of the Telescope.

I will now enumerate a few facts established by the latest data of science and corroborated by the most prominent astronomers of all countries. If you will follow me carefully you will have a true and realistic conception of the vast system of nature as it really is, so you can decide for yourself if it is reasonable to believe that a personal living God—and no other thing can be a God—can occupy infinitude of space pre-occupied by countless millions of incandescent, flying, whirling cosmic bodies, most of them so stupendous in size and of such extreme degree of heat that if our little pigmy of a globe would approach one of them even within a million of miles, it would vanish—its 1,500,000,000 vain and foolish "immortal souls" included, like a snow-flake falling on a blast furnace.

The earth looks big to man. It is a pebble compared to the sun, but the sun, among other suns is smaller comparatively than a grain of sand on the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

Our earth, which is of such great importance to us, is about 8,000 miles in diameter, but our sun is 865,000 miles in diameter. Yet there is the little star Arcturus which is a sun 94,000,000 miles in diameter. Can you now realize the insignificance of

the little orb we occupy? It would take 1,300,000 bodies like the earth to equal our sun, but 1,500,000 such suns are required to equal the giant sun Arcturus. The sun is only 95,000,000 miles away but this monster star is 11,500,000 times further off in space.

Sirius, the dog-star, is fifty eight thousand billions of miles away from us. Polaris, the north-star two hundred and ten thousand billions of miles or 2,318,000 times the distance of the earth from the sun. Think of it! The sun is 95,000,000 of miles away, but this enormous body of molten fire is off 2,318,000 times further.

What are the stars that people these awful depth of space? They are suns, countless millions of them, all gigantic, seething masses of fire, whirling and sweeping within their orbits with a velocity entirely beyond human comprehension—our sun merely a spark in an infinite shower of sparks.

Where is God? Think of meeting, seeing or communicating or praying to a God whose "other parts" are countless millions of miles off in space among this shower of sparks composed of the colossal, cosmic bodies described.

There is nothing to indicate a limit to the number of solar systems. One of them is 426 trillions of miles away. Since space and the number of these giant cosmic bodies are infinite, there can, of course, not be a most distant star.

We can think of a limited universe no more than of limited and external space. It must be infinite and external because the antithetical postulate is absurd.

These are the latest absolutely authentic revelations of Galileo's great invention concerning the universe of which we and our hand-ful of rock and clay are so infinitesimal a part. Can the church reconcile them with the revelations according to Moses and the prophets? If we but approximately grasp these wonderful awe-inspiring facts of nature we become atheistic, all gods vanish and old Genesis is relegated to the category of fairy-tales.

If a worm, crawling at our feet, could think and imagine this world and all it contains was made for him, it would be no more ridiculous than for us to believe that on "the fourth day," a personal god "walking in the garden," then and there made our sun, and "the stars also," to give light upon the earth, placed them in their respective localities billions and trillions of miles off in space, without scorching a single hair on his head, then complacently creating whales and other "creeping things" the next day!

#### All God-Ideals Absurd.

But I must not waste time clipping branches off of the tree of superstition but must fearlessly apply the ax to the root and prove that any god—from the crude concept of the savage in Africa to the lo-

ty ideals of the Rev. Mr. Savage of Boston—are alike impossible in nature.

A God in his transcendent wisdom having persistently refused to manifest himself to us, having never caused an obscuration, of sun, moon or star; the descriptions of him in the bible being infantile and radically contradictory; and a rational and comprehensive definition of any god-ideal by pope, priest or preacher not being forthcoming, the hypothesis, conceived to explain existence, must, in spite of its boary origin and its almost universal acceptance, be rejected. It creates and embodies vastly more and greater mysteries than those it pretends to explain.

A God to be a God and all it implies paramountly must be a personal living being. Personal attributes cannot exist in the absence of a person. An impersonal God—the inorganic forces, fluids, "aceous or etherial aggregations of matter, electricity, etc., cannot be the God or possess god-like qualities. But a "Heavenly Father," who possesses wisdom, love and capacity to consider the welfare and listen to the supplications of the millions who worship him, must be a living, conscious intelligent being or the qualities humanity attributes to such a being would, of course, be impossible.

Now if I don't utter another word and you will endeavor to grasp the actual condition and aspect of infinite expanse, as I have presented it, and where this supreme being is supposed to reside, you will realize that the tree of superstition, root, branch and all, has already tumbled over, not alone because life is impossible within inter-stellar space but also because the idea of a solitary being residing therein and occupying all space simultaneously with these soaring, burning giant bodies is too preposterous to be further considered.

Here theists insist that God is an unconditioned being that he is not dependent upon air, climate or environments. But these good people believe in and assume grotesque miracles, in conditions we don't know anything about and which science does not and cannot recognize, hence are excluded from the arena of debate. We are here and "der Zeitgeist" (spirit of the times) demands that we fearlessly settle the question "Can Theism be Maintained by Science and Reason?"

The greatest personality we can conceive is a man—grand in physique and mind (and in this sense man embraces woman.) Humboldt, Goethe, Hugo, Shakespeare, Emerson, Ingersoll, were such ideal personalities—the highest known to man. In the absence of this "crowning work of nature," consciousness and mind never originated and cannot be conceived. Hence it follows (and theism is now in the crucible!) that

a god must be an animal or there is none.

Emerson said: "Divine Personality is a theological cramp." He was practically an atheist because, in the absence of personality, what has he to deify but the force and matter of the Materialist?

Underwood said: "Infinite Personality is as contradictory as a square circle or round triangle." Of course it is: It is a God or a universe it cannot be both.

Has God a brain, then how can he be infinite? If no brain, no physical organism, how can he be a "Heavenly Father"—all wise, affectionate, just, and control the affairs of man?

Imagine a vast battle-field, hot shot and shells flying in every direction and dropping from the sky. Would it be reasonable to believe that any great general could occupy every position of this ground and survive? Yet this is what this god-myth implies.

Imagine a great railway center, all trains moving at the rate of ten miles a minute.

Could a solitary engineer possibly occupy each engine and all of them at the same time? If you know this is impossible why do you believe the far more unreasonable proposition that a god can be on this earth creating mice, men and mosquitos, listening to innumerable prayers, etc., revolving and flying through space with our little earth; and at the same time creating flowers, infants and whales on countless other planets, soaring through space with each one, and simultaneously guide the infinite number of cosmic bodies within their great orbits?

Think of investing the creator and ruler of an infinite universe with masculine gender!

Furthermore it is insisted that this God is omnipresent, theists realizing that a finite being could not be the ruler of an infinite universe and be everywhere at the same time. But this implies the absurd proposition that this vast infinite aggregation of

giant, burning cosmic bodies fly and gyrate around in "Him!" Certainly not a very comfortable state for even God to be in. He ought to have known better, and not, after living in peace and comfort during the eternity prior to the creative act, burden "Himself" with such monstrous intestinal convulsions!

Prof. David Swing, by far the most brilliant pastor that ever graced a Chicago pulpit, was one of the first orthodox ministers who dared to renounce the personal god idea. He said: "It may be that its faith in a Heavenly Father would become more real should we break away from the long and vain effort to embody God in a shape and give to Him some central locality. While we thus embody Him He can never seem to be near us. Evidently there is no such a God. To escape practical atheism we must throw away this old humanized Deity, and must ask all the air, and all

(Continued on next page.)

# The Woman's Burden

(By Harriet M. Closs)

It is said of Eugene V. Debs, that when asked for advice in regard to workmen's votes, said: "Find out what your masters want, then vote the other way."

This seems to be the state of Mrs. Closs's mind for when we find the popular throng headed in one direction we are pretty sure to find her in the ranks of the minority.

The following verses were written immediately after the great furor caused by the appearance of Kipling's—"The White Man's burden," and the subsequent flooding of the press by others with: "The Black Man's Burden," "The Brown Man's Burden," "The Workingman's Burden," "The Office-seeker's Burden," etc. This production was written while Mrs. Closs was sick in bed with Pneumonia, but instead of wasting time in prayers and conjuring heavenly visions, she wrote "The Woman's Burden," which has been copied all over the United States and in Canada and London liberal press.—Ed.)

Take up the Woman's Burden,  
She's borne her load too long  
In patience and submission,  
Despite the grievous wrong.  
Tradition has enslaved her,  
Its bonds are strong as steel,

And superstitions fetters  
Make wounds that will not heal.  
She's taught by Christian precept  
"In patience to abide,"  
To stand in sweet submission  
At her Lord and Master's side.  
And then for information  
To her husband she must go,  
And silence keep in Churches  
St. Paul has told her so.

So long she's been in bondage  
From reason been exiled—  
What wonder she bears children  
"Half devil and half child?"  
Eternal torment waits her,  
Should she but dare defy  
The great Jehovah's mandate:  
"Increase and multiply."

She must bring forth more soldiers,  
In "holy" wars to fight,  
Though to her sense of justice,  
Somehow, it seems not right.  
The priest with solemn summons  
Bids her—"Fulfill the law,"  
And girls must be recruited  
To fill the brothels maw.

Six hundred years she struggled  
Against this bar of "Might,"  
Seeking and pleading vainly

To gain her meed of right.  
Then Lo! A learned council  
Whose wisdom we extol,  
With due deliberation  
Allowed she had a soul.  
But years full fourteen hundred  
Have passed away since then,  
And still she is considered  
Inferior to men.  
For her are laws enacted,  
For her decrees are made  
By legislator, priest and Judge,  
Which all her rights invade

Her sons still march to battle—  
Will wonders never cease?  
Their lives are freely given  
To serve the "Prince of Peace."  
Her daughters by the thousands,  
Who Christian license hold,  
Are languishing in bondage,  
And half cannot be told.

Take up the woman's burden!  
She's waiting to be freed  
From the tyranny of priestcraft,  
From Court and rite and creed.  
Your dogmatism cast aside,  
Remember Human ties  
Unbind the Woman's Burden  
And let the victim rise.

the seas, and all the prairies with the variegated plains, and all the perfume in the winds, and the song of the birds, and the laughter of our children, and the deeper thoughts and emotions, to be the place where God has his habitation. For what do we know of the form of the Creator? What must we think of a Power which made the universe across which, even as far as measured by man, light itself (traveling at the rate of 136,000 miles per second!) cannot pass in a million years. To place into bodily shape and imprison even in a palace of gold and gems such a Creator is to make little children of ourselves.

This radical departure from old Calvinism brought down the wrath of Dr. Patton and his elders. They quickly called a council, tried him for heresy and kicked this man, who had more intellect than the total aggregate of all the wisdom in the church combined, out of his pulpit. The Prof. and his admirers forthwith procured one of the largest auditoriums in the heart of the city and organized the People's Church in which he preached to crowded houses until his untimely death.

Prof. Swing, like many others of the brainiest men in the church, was an atheist in name only. He spoke to theists and clothed his beautiful language in theistic garb, but his ideas were purely atheistic. How can his "Heavenly Father" be void of personality and retain personal attributes? Why retain personal pronouns "He," "His," "Him," etc., if not a person? How can "He" be in the wind, etc., language of a child, etc., when he means the unconscious energy and potencies of matter all the time? Concessions to orthodox prejudice? Armstrong called it.

#### The Chemistry of Matter the Sole Cause of Organic Life.

From one of B. F. Underwood's lectures I quote: "Theologians view matter as mere dirt unless stirred, like the fabled pools of Bethesda, by the potent touch of Jehovah. But why first divest it of its noblest powers and attributes? Let them restore to it the qualities of which it has been robbed to enrich a being whose glory has been at the cost of humanity, and they will then see in it the beautiful elements that make the precious opal, the amethyst and the brilliant diamond, the delicate bluebell and the violet, the lily and rose-hud, the ruby lip and the love-lit eye, the palpitating heart and the wonderful brain."

Prof. Dolbear lately made the following statement in corroboration of the above: "It was once thought that matter itself was altogether inert and lifeless, and forces of different kinds were believed to be necessary in order to have it do anything. Now we are aware that this notion is erroneous. A lump of coal weighing a pound possesses energy enough to lift its weight

nearly two thousand miles high. Every particle of matter is constantly exerting its influence upon every other particle of matter, however far they may be apart, and, if left to themselves, will come together. The power to do this is inherent in matter, and not in forces external to it, so that one after another of the so-called forces have been given up as representing anything more than some sort of motion. There is left, then, only matter and ether (this is matter, or nothing) and the various forms of motion to account for the different phenomena of nature. Even organic phenomena, such as belong to living things, have no other antecedents."

Said Prof. Tyndall: "Matter is not that empty capacity which theologians have pictured it, but the universal mother who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb. Nature is seen to do all things spontaneously, without the meddling of the gods."

Herbert Spencer endorses Materialism as follows: "Each generation of physicists discover in so-called brute matter powers which, but a few years ago, the most instructed physicist would have thought incredible." "When there is forced upon him the inference that every point in space thrills with an infinity of vibrations, the conception to which he tends is much less that of a universe of dead matter, than that of a universe everywhere alive—alive not in restricted sense, still in a general sense."

Again, analyzing theism in his great brain, he said: "If, then, I have to conceive evolution as caused by an originating mind, I must conceive this mind as having attributes akin to those of the only mind I know, and without which I cannot conceive mind at all. I cannot think of a single series of states of consciousness as causing even the relatively small group of actions going on over the earth's surface,—how, then, is it possible for me to conceive of an originating mind; which I must represent to myself as a single series of states of consciousness working the infinitely multiplied series of changes simultaneously going on in worlds too numerous to count, dispersed throughout a space that baffles imagination."

In other words: We cannot think of a single mind or factor causing even the limited measure of organisms on our little earth, much less conceive of a mind capable of producing all the phenomena of an infinite universe.

Think of a solitary mechanic producing by his "handiwork" not only all the watches made in America but also simultaneously making all those made in Europe; and, in addition, constructing all other mechanical product in the world. If not grotesque miracle what is it?

New-school theologians and laymen, who

have discarded a six-day creation, snake and fish stories, the trinity, a literal hell, devil, etc., but who can still believe in this mythical omnipresent, omniscient cloud, impersonal phantom, spook and miracle worker, in spite of the facts now in their possession concerning the actual state and aspect of the grand system of nature, should forthwith resign their manhood, prostrate their reason, believe every word in the bible, and swear blind obedience to the authority of Rome. There is no middle ground, no stopping place between Catholicism and Natureism.

The infinity of cosmic activity and organic life constitutes a job far too big for a single agent, and countless millions of Gods would be required to prevent it, rather than a single God to produce it. The mystery involved in such an infinite being and "His miraculous handiwork" creating men, mice and constellations, towers above the mysteries of nature as the Himalaya mountains above an ant-hill.

"We KNOW that the supernatural does not exist," said Ingersoll in his last lecture, after being an Agnostic all his life. Continuous honest research convinced him that on the highway of intellectual progress there was no half-way house between the orthodoxy of his father and Materialism.

If a merchant desires to know what his stock consists of, he takes an inventory of his wares, then KNOWS not only what he has, but also what he HAS NOT. So our astronomers have taken an accurate inventory of the contents of space with telescopes and photo-plates; have penetrated infinite expanse for a trillion of miles; have discovered countless suns and systems, yet a God has not been verified as yet. All is found to be nature—no heaven, no hell!

There is and can be but one rational solution to the riddle of existence, namely: the constant motion and activity of eternal matter and its infinite changes and combinations force us to the conclusion that nature must contain within its own elements the source and forces necessary to produce all the diversified phenomena manifest in our environments and in the boundless expanse beyond.

The potentialities causing all forms of matter, from infusoria to constellations, must be ubiquitous, co-existent with the material constituting such forms, or the latter would be dependent for their being upon chance, volition or caprice—liable to be deprived of such essential elements of existence at any time in any part of or in all space, thus causing either sectional or universal stagnation or inertia, all unknown or impossible conditions in nature. In fact, the God hypothesis involves the absurd proposition that nature is universally inert, dead and impotent in and of itself to cause universal life and cosmic activity, and that therefore, a God, endowed



with arbitrary power, omnipotence and omniscience, is a necessary accessory to account for nature's manifold product.

Science insists that wherever there is matter there is force—that matter is force, both physical and chemical,—and that therefore, every world contains within its own constituents, and carries around with itself (as it flies through space and whirls on its axis) all the potentialities needed for the harmonious existence of its innumerable passengers on land, in the seas and air; hence needs not stop on its long journey of ages to admit pilot or captain to guide it in its course and attend to the needs of its innumerable inmates.

Is this incredible? But we know it is true. All life is traced to the chemical elements of matter, absolutely nothing to a God. These, physical conditions favoring, produce the beautiful rose-bush and the myriads of lice that devour it when in its glory. Now, if the God theory solves the mystery of the rose-bush and the lice, I want theists to explain. But if there is infinitely more mystery involved in a God—a la artificer—producing the roses and then the lice to devour them, simultaneously creating all other organic structures on antipodal parts of our earth, this revolving on its axis and flying through space with lightning rapidity, "his other parts" billions of miles away among an infinite aggregation of burning bodies I have described, then it is our duty to reject the hypothesis. Of two antithetical theories let us accept the most reasonable.

Referring to this subject, Herbert Spencer said: "They (theists) seem quite to forget that their own theory is supported by no facts at all. Like the majority of men who are born to a given belief, they demand a most rigorous proof of an adverse belief, but assume that their own needs none."

Therefore until a God makes his presence known, or until Pope or preachers divest the God-myth of the inscrutable mysteries now associated with it it is plainly the duty of rational men and women to remain on the solid ground of Materialism, and seek in nature the basis of all cosmic phenomena and life.

If some one would tell us what the "man in the moon" can do and does, it would be of primary importance that he produce evidence that the "man in the moon" really exists and is a fact; otherwise his assertion would be of no value. For like reasons, all talk and tradition of what a God can do and has done falls to the ground, until theists first decide which of their innumerable Gods is "the only true, living God," and then prove his existence as an absolute fact.

Here is where the Materialist is more consistent and rational than the theist. He remains upon terra firma and confines

his belief to what he knows. He is aware that nature is the supreme fact of existence. It requires no proof. He looks around and it proves itself. The sum-total of all existence is the basis of his belief, and he knows that every object and form of matter—from the dew-drop to constellations, from infusoria to man—is the spontaneous product of the potencies of matter, and not the "miraculous handiwork" of an almighty spook.

Even the great Gladstone admitted that outside of the Bible there is no evidence of a God. He said: "Unless you accept the testimony of the Bible as conclusive, what evidence have you of God's existence and man's immortality?"

#### Many of our Greatest Minds Atheists.

The brainiest men of the world have been Atheists. Alex. Von Humboldt, at the age of 82, delivered a course of 60 lectures in Berlin, to the scientists of the world, on the physical construction of the universe, and never spoke the word "God." He had traveled over the world, descended into the earth and explored the regions beyond the earth, but discovered no God, no heaven, no devil and no hell. (By the way, isn't infinite vacuity vastly preferable to a world with a hell in it?)

Many of our greatest thinkers have been Atheists, though often preferring to pose as agnostic and theists. But all those rejecting the inerrancy of the Bible (having absolutely no other basis for their faith) were practical Atheists.

Science has progressed majestically during the last century, but it has not discovered a single proof of a God, of a heaven or hell. Theology is now precisely what it was a thousand years ago. The Rev. Dr. Hatfield said: "Theology is not a progressive science; the revelation is made once for all, and the book is shut, the hasp is upon it and it is sealed. New interpretations and expurgations will not save it, and we must believe in that man-god as described in that hoary book or we are practical Atheists. Nothing else proves, defines or indicates a God."

We may then justly classify all those who reject the infallibility of the Bible as Atheists. This includes the illustrious names of Thomas Paine, Theodore Parker, Felix Adler, Buckle, Brougham, Burns, Bancroft, Byron, Bryant, Beecher, Bolingbroke, Bacon, Buechner, Burrows, Bierce, Bradlaugh, Bruno, Bastian, Balzac, Buffon, Barnard, Barker, Bismarck, Bain, Carlyle, Castellar, Comte, Clifford, Channing, Carus, Combes, Chesterfield, Condorcet, Clemencau, Carnegie, Cotter, Cavour, Casson, Darwin, D'Holbach, Draper, Dickens, Denton, Emerson, Elliott, Froude, Field, Fichte, Feuerbach, Fiske, Flint, Fechner, Greeley, Goethe, Gibbon, Gunning, Garrison, Guizot, Galileo, Von Glzyki, Girard, Hugo, Huxley, Von Humboldt, Helne, Hecker,

Helmholz, Hartman, Hegel, Haeckle, Helvelius, Harrison, Hammond, Ladd, Hobbes, Jefferson, Job, Ingersoll, Kant, Ingalls, Kronsecker, Liebig, Lessin, Lyell, Lowell, Lawrence, Lincoln, Larkin, Lewes, Lecky, La Place, Leibnitz, Lamark, Linne, Lindsay, Ledy, Lesley, Lander, La Leur, Lamartine, Locke, Mill, Makintosh, Martineau, Moliere, Macaulay, Maudsley, Moleshott, Mueller, Marsh, Montgomery, Morley, Mott, Moore, Morse, Martin, Mirabeau, Mazzini, Nott, Nordau, Owen, Oken, Oswald, Plinius, Pope, Proudhon, Phillips, Priestley, Pompanazzi, Parton, Rosseau, Russell, Rochefort, Rochester, Ruskin, Renan, Roland, Rokitsansky, Raymond, Romaines, Remsburg, Servitus, Strauss, Sand, Sumner, Spencer, Smith, Stallo, Shelley, Seneca, Spinoza, Schiller, Shoppenhauer, Stephens, Smurz, Shafsbury, St. Hillaire, Spence, Saltus, Schleiermacher, Shelling, Somerville, de Stael, Shakespeare, Tolland, Tyndall, Tennyson, Moreau, Topinard, Underwood, Volney, Vogt, Vaughn, Vignoli, Virchow, Wright, Wolstoncraft, Wallace, Ward, Wilcox, Walte, Wakeman, Youmans, and many others.

John Stewart Mill, one of the most brilliant writers of the last century, said: "The world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest ornaments, of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue, are complete skeptics in religion."

Henry Ward Beecher confessed that, "It is discouraging to see so many men religious without being moral, and so many moral without being religious."

#### Morals Without Religion

Schiller said: "A robust nature (Eine Gesunde Natur) needs no God and immortality. . . . There must be moral laws which suffice even without this belief."

And Froude: "What has ecclesiasticism to do with the moral laws? It puts them all aside and puts its own creed in their place."

From an editorial in a late "Popular Science Monthly, I quote: "The word has gone forth: Morality must stand on a basis of natural law or it cannot stand at all. . . . There is no uncertainty as to the fundamental principles of morals; but we have weakly allowed ourselves to think that the authority of all our moral teaching is bound up with certain traditional doctrines. That is the cardinal error which earnest men should strive with all their power to banish."

The church has labored persistently to impress upon its subjects that morals are intimately associated with theology and dependent upon religion; that it has been generally taken for granted that there exist no motives for morality in the absence of religion—one of the libelous methods of the  
(Continued on Page 14.)

## BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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 JOHN R. CHARLESWORTH, . . . . . Editor  
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## OUR PREMIUM OFFER.

In an effort to encourage our friends to aid us in increasing the circulation of the Blade, thereby building it up and advancing the cause of Freethought along with it, we call attention to the premium offer we announce on the back of this issue.

So many of our friends have written us from time to time of the value they find in the Blade and that they are saving their copies each week for the purpose of having them bound. From this came the suggestion that we could advantageously bind some copies ourselves, in cloth, and give them to our friends who shall truly and consistently deserve them according to the amount of work done for us and the interest they manifest in our welfare.

The cost of binding up this volume, the lettering to be put on, with the name of the person intending to own the same, and considering the value of one year's issue, will be at least three dollars and fifty cents. To sell them at this price would not yield any profit, but we would rather give them away to friends who succeed in obtaining fifteen yearly subscriptions to the Blade at the regular price, for in this we just about break even and we have increased our subscription list at the same time.

The bound volume, when completed, will contain every copy that has been issued in its present form, from January 19th last up to and including December 27th of the present

year. This will give 50 pictures and biographies of Freethinkers and will be worthy a place in any library.

Would you not like a copy of this bound volume?

Then will you not make an effort to get the number of subscribers we ask for and earn it?

We have fixed the time limit at December 1, 1908, in order to get the next four weeks within which to get our lists and book orders made up in time for the new year.

The subscriptions secured can begin at any time they are sent in and they will be counted in the final total.

Such a premium would make a splendid New Year's present and if any friend wishes to purchase a copy, without securing the necessary subscribers, we will take orders for them now at the price of \$3.50 each.

When ordering be sure to give the full name of the person for whom it is intended.

Success demands constant work and persistent effort.

No business, no concern, ever achieved success by permitting things to drift along with the tide.

The Blade is ambitious to succeed.

So many plans, so many avenues of labor, so many matters pertaining to the advancement of Freethought crowd in upon us that with but one to do and work, some must be neglected.

Co-operation offers the best remedy, the best solution of the problem and if we could impart some of our own enthusiasm to others, the battle would be easily won.

The world needs workers!

Suppose we construe that to mean the world of Freethought!

Then Freethought needs workers. It needs men and women who have the courage and are willing to dare and do.

The season of the year is now upon us when the most effective work can be done for our cause and the Blade beseeches the hearty co-operation of all its friends. Its circulation must be increased if it is kept up to its present high standard.

Get your news agents to handle the Blade. Talk to them and we will allow liberal commissions for selling it.

Do not let the autumn months pass by without doing something for the cause. Many little helps when done together, will accomplish most wonderful results. You would be surprised to find out what those little helps would do.

See that your own tab is up-to-date.

Do not wait for someone else to begin the work but put your own shoulder to the wheel.

The Blade now needs all the assistance it can get and to this extent it is altogether dependent upon its friends.

## JEWISH WOMEN AND RELIGION.

Some orthodox Jew, carrying the name of Guiseppe Cameo, writing in the Zionist organ, Modena, insists that not only are the Jews, as a race, ashamed of their religion and their nationality, but he accuses the Jewish women of being responsible for this utter disregard of religion.



If it be true that, as a rule, the Jewish women, are so indifferent as to their own religion as to be made the subject of such a comment, it would reasonably follow that they are also indifferent concerning any and all religion, and, therefore, independent of priests, preachers, rabbis and such writers as the one above mentioned. Now, considering the further fact that so few Jewish women can be found in any country who are willing to barter their womanly virtues for gold, or bread, as the case may be, it speaks well for them as a class, and affords a strong argument against religious influences upon women. Is it not a known fact that the inhabitants of what are termed the "red-light" districts in all large cities are believers in diet and church worship, if not attendants upon the latter? Then compare Jewish women with Christian women, and then contrast the influences of religion upon the latter and the influences of no religion upon the former. The result must be apparent.

Continuing, this same writer draws a contrast between the devotion of Christian women towards their clergy with the utter indifference, and partial contempt of the Jewish women for their religious leaders, and urges that Jewish women must follow the example of their Christian sisters. There's the rub. This writer perceives that the women are the support of the Christian churches. He regrets that Jewish women cannot be brought to the same condition of mental and menial slavery that some preachers may be clothed in fine raiment and keep a well-lined stomach. It is a case of bread and butter, not regard for the orthodox faith. It usually happens that when a preacher, or professor of orthodoxy opens his mouth he manages to get his number ten foot in it, and we see that this is precisely what has happened in this instance.

Thinking, earnest and serious people, those who have a high regard for the race, will express regret that Christian women have not yet the moral and virtuous excellence attained by Jewish women, and, like them, cut the theological leading strings and undertake to manage their own religious affairs without the aid of a paid or hired preacher.

The foot hurts when the shoe pinches. May the time soon come when the Christian advocates will find themselves in the same predicament and shorn of the foolish attention and flattery of the women.

#### FREETHOUGHT PROPAGANDA.

Following the announcement of Mrs. Eliza Mowry Bliven, secretary of the Materialist Association, for a more energetic propaganda, come the communication from Miss Lou Lawrence, secretary of the Buckeye Secular Union, calling for a combined effort whereby the purpose of the Union, calling for a combined effort whereby the purpose of the Union may be enhanced and the cause aided to a more systematic campaign for greater growth.

With two such women at work for the uplift of humanity, giving of their time and talents to secure the permanent happiness of others, without one selfish thought, or desire,

they should be given that hearty support worthy of the cause they represent and everything possible should be done to place both organizations upon a more secure footing.

Personal appeals, as Miss Lawrence intimates, will go further along the lines suggested, than indirect appeals through a leaflet or a pamphlet. The personal contact of the Freethought advocate, the opportunity of seeing and knowing the manner of man or woman he or she may be, the magnetism of the voice, the meeting and talking, are calculated to do more real good than all the literature ever distributed, and in this respect Miss Lawrence has hit upon a real and solid argument. But the real issue is to bring such forces into active operation. Miss Lawrence makes known her plans in this issue of the Blade, and invites a general discussion among the friends of the cause as to its utility and practicability. The Blade offers its columns for such a discussion, and the Freethinkers of America are invited to take part therein as a means of discovering the best methods of propaganda.

From what is taking place it is evident that the officers of both organizations do not propose to allow the work brought up by the recent conventions to lapse and die for want of attention. This shows the correct idea of propaganda. Resolutions and speeches may point out a way for effective work, but they remain a dead letter unless put into practice. Conventions do no more than allow Freethinkers an opportunity of meeting with each other unless an effort is made to effectually carry out the work suggested thereby. Once these organizations will show the Freethinkers of the country that they mean actual business, the Blade believes the proper support and patronage will be forthcoming.

Our readers are asked to peruse what these ladies have written. Mrs. Bliven's letter appeared two weeks ago. The communication from Miss Lawrence is given in this issue. Read them both over. Write to the Blade what you think of the plans suggested, and it may be that from all such sources some more expedient method may be drawn.

In any event, we need a more effective, more systematic method of propaganda than we have to-day. The Blade is ready, willing and anxious to do all that lays within its power to secure such propaganda, but it can do very little if it has to play a lone hand.

Let us all get together and work together for the good of the common cause.

No better way to advance the cause of mental freedom than by public lectures. The Editor is contemplating a short trip into Indiana and Illinois the latter part of November and the beginning of December. If you want lectures in those States write him at once for terms, dates and subjects.

All who are willing to participate in the symposium on "No future life," as suggested by Secretary Bliven, of the Materialist Association, are requested to communicate with her on the subject. Box 76, Brooklyn, Conn.

## AN ORTHODOX LIAR.

"If by my lie I abound to the glory of God, why am I to be adjudged a sinner?"

So wrote the Apostle Paul, at least it is so recorded by questionable authority, but it also seems to be the personal opinion of a remote Texas editor of an unknown Texas paper, residing at Denton, or thereabouts.

From the days of Constantine it has never been deemed a sin to lie about the unbeliever, and the more apt disciples of the Nazarene appear to be in no great haste to abandon such a policy. If god is truth he must love truth, wherever it be found, whether—

"On heathen, Christian or Atheist ground,"

but his followers in these days, as of old, cannot grasp such a lofty ideal, and they enjoy with relish the malicious pastime of deliberately inventing falsehoods concerning their intellectual superiors, and resort to the further crime of giving them publication in organs of questionable veracity.

Some friend has sent a marked copy of a small paper to our office containing a scurrilous editorial from some backwoods writer who evidently "loveth a lie", and entitled "Why Do Infidels Recant?" The very title is a mere unprovable assertion, while the subject matter under it is composed of the most glaring falsehoods and inaccuracies that ever found their way into type. Here are a few examples:

"Why is it so few really intellectual men are infidels?"

"Why did Ingersoll join the church before his death, seemingly as a palliation for his blindness to truth?"

"The writer recalls that the most despised man in a regiment of 1,200 soldiers to which he belonged during the Spanish-American war, was an infidel parading under the guise of a Freethinker."

"Freethinkers cringe and trimble like frightened puppies under the broad, ambiguous term, infidel."

"Ninety-nine per cent of the population of the United States are believers in the Christian religion."

Just how such a worthless ray could devise so many inconsistencies in so small a space is almost beyond conception, and it is lucky for him that the god in which he believes has abandoned the policy of striking liars dead; otherwise he might not be living now. As a literary ragout, it is consoling to know that few can be found who will place any belief or credence in such a compilation.

And so Ingersoll joined a church! But what church? Where did it occur, and when? Some authority should be given. The statement is not that the writer "believes" Ingersoll joined church, but that Ingersoll actually did so. Then it follows that the writer knows this to be a fact. It cannot be mere hearsay, and the best evidence would be to give date, place, name and denomination of church and some names of the persons who were present at the time. Such an event could not go without notice, and had it really occurred there would be abundant evidence concerning it.

As a matter of fact, Ingersoll never did join any church,

and this creature, who may call himself a man, knew that he wrote and printed what was an untruth when he made use of such a statement.

When expressing his opinion upon the religious beliefs of the people of this nation, it would appear that a slight inaccuracy of description has been made. Had he said "penitentiary" instead of the "United States", every well-informed man and woman would give ready assent thereto. Before attempting any reiteration of such a statement its author is advised to seek genuine information.

Self-glorification had to creep into an article of this kind, for it is a case of suspected vanity in foisting information upon a disinterested public to try and let them know that the author was actually in a regiment of 1,200 men during the Spanish-American war. There may have been an infidel among its membership, and if the regiment could boast that number of men it is certain that more than one infidel were among them. And yet it is dollars to doughnuts that this very writer, were he actually there, never got into action against the enemy, and were his regiment ordered to any point where danger lurked, he could have been found hiding in the tall grass, catching cold thereby and then asking Uncle Sam for a pension for injuries so received. It is a safe assumption that any man who could even think such an article, much less to pen one, is both a moral and physical coward and the truth is not in him.

In this day and age infidelity and intellect, compared and contrasted with orthodox conceptions, are made necessary corollaries. Like a mighty flood the tide of infidelity has set in and the churches are swamped therewith to such an extent that every preacher must struggle might and main to keep his congregation up to the sectarian shibboleth. Heresy trials are rapidly becoming a fad, and this sets a mark of infidelity in church ranks as a result of education. Before education became general the people were almost universally believers in orthodoxy. With education came heterodoxy and its concomitant, infidelity. The real wonder is that any man claiming to be intellectual can longer remain in the church, and all such cases are regarded as monstrosities, the result of abnormal thought. Every great intellect has been on the outside of the church and all great intellects today refuse the orthodox stamp.

But why do infidels recant? Who says that infidels do recant? Nobody but a small editorial fice living at Denton, Texas. What infidel ever recanted to his personal knowledge? No hearsay. None of what somebody else has said. Facts are demanded, and in this instance names, places, and dates would prove valuable aids in any investigation that might want to be made.

After all it may be a waste of space to offer this discussion, but if, by calling the hand of such a fellow as this we can elicit genuine information, some good might be accomplished. If he fails or refuses so to do, he must stand branded as a coward as well as a liar.

## SCIENTIFIC THEOLOGY.

The very title of this article suggests a physical and scientific impossibility.

All science is progressive, ever moving onward and upward, discovering new facts and demonstrating them.

Theology must, from its very nature, be and always remain stationary and inactive. Theology does not and can not contain the elements of progress. If god be perfection, then all progress comes to an end the moment we reach god. Beyond that idea theology cannot go. If science could reveal god, then it might be made a valuable adjunct to theology, but as science leads eternally and forever away from the god-idea, science moves forward and theology goes on the down grade. Their paths separate and as each continues along the way they become more widely divergent.

To abuse modern science has been the self-assumed task of the clergy and professional theologians. Science brought about a new conception of the universe. It presented an array of indisputable facts as argument, and the advocates of theology arrayed themselves against it to a man. Little by little science forged its way through all the gross and degrading superstitions it encountered at every step, until it stood triumphant—supreme. Then followed an era of conciliation. Efforts were made to show that science did not disagree with revealed religion. This failed. Another course was later pursued, and now the general claim is made by the most advanced of the clergy that science is an actual and positive ally of religion.

Some writer, whose name is not given, in the *Biblical World*, published at Chicago, contends that science is not only an aid to religion, but asserts that "the assimilation of the scientific spirit in the realm of theology and religion unifies the spirit life."

But why such a claim? What induces it? What are the underlying motives for asserting it? It is because scientific investigation has invaded all our colleges and universities, and the clergy can readily foresee the drift of the popular mind as a resultant thereof. The more true science, the less regard for theology. The student is soon brought face to face with demonstrable facts that absolutely contradict the old theological notions instilled into his mind during childhood. The awakening of the intellect becomes fatal to theology. It is impossible to think scientifically and then be compelled to bow the knee to a supposed theological authority. Such a course would make mental progress both hesitating and ineffective. This conclusion finds ample corroboration from the fact that all the truly great scientists are on the outside of the realm of theology and have abandoned it altogether as a factor in scientific investigation. With full and complete confidence in the proposition that what is true is good, for truth must be good, the thinker faces every fact with equal openness of mind and cordial welcome. He is ready and willing to take all truth, new or old, and thus acquires a state of intellectual manhood.

Confront a firm theologian with a scientific fact that con-

tradicts his cherished notion of deity and he at once rejects the fact and refuses even to investigate his deity. This is unscientific. For this reason there can be no scientific theology.

Our premium offer is made as a means of enabling us to double our circulation before the present year goes out. If we can accomplish this much we propose to increase the size of the *Blade* and create additional literary departments for it. As a matter of fact we are now crowded with a number of splendid articles which we cannot publish for lack of space. We expect to reach them all in due time. To enable the publication of as many as possible we have been compelled to omit the *Current Comment* from week to week. We need more pages to the *Blade* to keep up with our contributors, but we cannot afford the additional expense, with the pictures, unless the circulation is such as to guarantee the extra cost and expense. Will you not try to secure one of these handsome premiums? We do not ask you to work for the *Blade* for nothing. Fifteen new subscribers will get you a bound volume of the *Blade*, and, besides, look what you have done for the *Blade* and the cause it represents.

The Editor's busy season is now on. Examinations from the students of the Correspondence School are beginning to arrive, and these have to be gone over in detail, examined thoroughly, and given the proper grading. Should you fail to receive a prompt reply to any communication you will realize the cause of the delay.

Mrs. Henry is now at work upon the preparation of another article of her series on the Bible. Watch for it. In the meantime, do not forget her splendid little pamphlet on *Marriage and Divorce*. Single copies 25 cents, which can be had by writing to her at Versailles, Ky.

Keep your eyes on our great premium offer. If you value the *Blade* at all you will certainly appreciate a bound volume. We are giving this volume away to those of our friends who secure fifteen subscribers for us between now and December 1st. Read the premium offer on the back page.

Several orders have been received for a bound volume of *Blade* at the close of the current year. Only a limited number of these can be made up and none will be bound without having been previously ordered. This will include all the numbers since the change was made in its form. The name of the purchaser will be printed on the cover and if any of our friends wish a volume, either for themselves, or to make a suitable New Year's present to another, be sure to get your order in the *Blade* office in time. The cost will be \$3.50.



## The Blade's Correspondence

Sees a Need for the Blade.

TUCKERTON, N. J., Sept. 29. Dear Sir:—After reading your editorial several weeks ago, hubby and I agreed to spare part of not all of the subscription for the Blade, but I had the misfortune to fall and twist my foot badly. The doctor said it was worse than a break and ten times more painful, and I can agree with him. I am getting around on crutches, but the medicine has made quite a hole in the pocket-book, so I must postpone my subscription for awhile. It is worse for me, as one leg was already shorter than it really ought to be on account of a former accident.

Every day I see more and more of the need of such papers as the Blade, but I cannot commend H. J. Slocum in last issue. My father used to say when two were in an argument and one commenced to call names or throw mud at the other, he knew his case was lost. Now I don't think Slocum's side lost, but such language will convince no one. I should have asked that preacher as I have others, if Genesis is to be taken literally, how he explains God's command to replenish the earth. One can not re-fill a thing until it has been filled once. I have often asked this, but have never been answered. In fact, the preachers fight shy of me. The last one that tried to convert me couldn't say anything but "Don't you want to go to heaven?" I replied that if the Bible is true I stood just as good a chance as he, for by our deeds we shall be judged. He agreed that I taught such. When he was taking his departure he lingered on the porch and listened to our remarks about him. I saw him all the time through an open window. I wrote to the People's Press several years ago my opinion on the origin of the Hell theory, and asked others to give theirs. No one did. Here is mine: As we never read about an earthquake or volcanic eruption but that we read also about the gas or sulphur smell which always accompanies it, it looks plausible that to the minds of the early ignorant and superstitious inhabitants of this globe some such disturbance gave rise to the belief in Hell. This was made use of by the unprincipled men to subject the masses and get an easy living then as now. The preacher I refer to did not even claim to believe this, but said: "What can I do? It's my business." I told him to go to work like others. I am giving the extra number to one who is

seeing the light quite clear; has several sons, but is an invalid. She told me she used to attend church meetings and tremble in fear of hell. Her folks were all red-hot Methodists, and she used to be so afraid of death. What a life to live! I told them I would rather spend eternity in a Christian's hell with a Devil I can respect than in their heaven with a God I should despise. And I do despise such a God as they represent. Why he is not half as good or as powerful as the Devil he made, for he, this all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving God, made the Devil to tempt and get 99 out of every 100, according to their own belief. What a God! Dr. Adam Clark, in his Commentaries on the Bible, said Jesus' family: 1. e. his father, mother, brothers and sisters, were of such ill-repute that their neighbors would have nothing to do with them. Thus his remark about the prophet having honor in his own town. But if you have made this out, or spent your time on it, you must be tired. So I will thank you for papers sent, both the ones I keep and the extras. Yours.—MRS. M. FISKE.

Liked Heald's Article.

GALT, CALIF.—After a long delay, I send you P. O. order for \$3, as back dues and future balance, if any. My physical and financial condition during the past year has been the cause of my delay to pay I hope to be able to meet all my obligations for the Blade and several other papers soon. The discontinuance of "Higher Science" is a great blow to the liberal cause, but we hope and believe Brother Heald will be of great benefit to the readers of the Blade. His article under the head of "Cause and Cure of Intemperance" is the ablest and best, and the only solution of the problem of Intemperance that I ever read. And I hope Bro. Heald will roast the Dog Lovers of California. I believe that there are enough dogs in California, if distributed properly, to supply one dog for every family in the United States. California is the grandest country with the best climate in America (or probably on earth) but the innumerable saloons and worthless dogs are a curse that more than offsets all the good qualities of the grand country. If there was one dollar tax put on the head of every saloon and dog in the state, we believe the amount of revenue would educate every poor orphan in its boundaries; and if all the money that is spent for strong

drink and dog food, was converted to the benefit of the widows and orphans it would feed and clothe every one of them. Then there would be a big surplus too. Hurrah for Bro. Heald! I am behind with obligations to him, which I hope to meet with soon. Then there is Brother Channing Severance—a Liberal of Liberals—and one of our greatest Freethought writers. I noticed his letter in the Blade several weeks ago stating that he is nearly blind. I suppose he is a laboring man and lives by work. If so, he may need help to fight the battles of life. He is a Freethought veteran of the highest rank, and is worthy the attention of his letters in the Blade are read and appreciated, and we hope to read them again. Then there is Dr. Wilson, who is not contributing as often as he did some years ago. We supposed he was busy composing that book of poems he promised us. We are waiting anxiously for a copy, and would like to hear something more about it from him.—JOHN D. FARRIS.

Freethought Barbecue.

LORENA, TEXAS.—As you will see in "The Searchlight", we had a Liberal Barbecue and Speaking at Sloan's Tank on the 15th inst., which is 12 miles east of the city of Waco. We had a big crowd, and all seemed to be happy. Some five or six liberals spoke on various subjects, but the principle lecture was by our old editor and ex-preacher, J. D. Shaw. His subject was "Why I Left the Church," and was a treat which we old infidels don't often get a chance to enjoy, and one which will take a long time to forget. Your humble scribe tried to talk on "Some Absurdities of the Christian Church." The following are some of the points mentioned: Beginning with the greatest absurdity of all, viz: that a few thousand years ago a being called the "Lord God" came into existence from nowhere and created a universe from nothing; made a man out of the dust and a woman from a part of the man. This "Lord God" foreknew all things; was a god of wisdom, of love, of mercy, of justice; yet created a devil to thwart his will and purposes; let that devil get away with his best efforts. That god planted a tree in the midst of his garden whose fruit would make one wise, but forbid his children to partake of it; knew from the beginning they would eat of it, and he would have to raise up a son to be sacrificed to possibly save a few of his children from a hell he must needs make. He kicked that devil out of heaven onto the earth, knowing too he would cause all this trouble unless he put him in hell and kept him there. Another absurdity among many others is the Judas case. "Christ knew from the beginning who would betray him," John 6-64. And

too, Jesus promised these twelve apostles that "When he came into his kingdom they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Luke 22-30. "That God so loved the world he sent his son to die, to shed his blood for an atonement for our sins." Had to die, had to shed his blood to fill that "Fountain filled with blood," that "Sinners might plunge beneath its flood and loose all their guilty stains," etc., etc. All in all, we had a nice meeting; everybody seemed to enjoy the occasion, and there was talk of having our next at Hallsburg nearby, which would be more convenient; also to build a substantial harbor and pavilion. Dr. Hall, from whom the burg takes its name, is a whole-souled liberal, as well as his good wife. They certainly know how to make one feel welcome.—D. F. MARRS.

#### Renews Subscription.

PETROLEUM CENTER, PA.—Enclosed I send you \$1.50 to renew my subscription to the Blade. I would like to have you answer the following question: The Bible tells us, 2 Peter 3-10, "Behold the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt away with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Eccles. 1-4 reads: "One generation passeth away and another cometh, but the earth abideth forever." Which of them is right? Matt. 23-9: "And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven." St. John 8-44: "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Can you tell me which one has the largest family? I was reading in a newspaper some time ago about a wealthy church member who died and left some forty thousand dollars for the use of the church until the second coming of Christ, after which time it was to be divided among his lawful heirs. Don't you believe his heirs would get it just as soon if he had left it to the church until H—ll froze over?—JOSEPH FILWELL.

#### WRONG NOTIONS OF FREEDOM.

FARGO, OKLA.—I here inclose \$1.50 to pay my subscription up to Jan. 1907. Sorry I have delayed it so long, but hope it will be accepted now.

I am a farmer and I haven't had time to read one Blade out of three. It is all work and no pleasure for a farmer and all laboring people that at night after our day's work is done we are so near wore-out that when we sit down to rest, or read for a few minutes, we fall to sleep before we get started to reading, and as for under-

standing what we read, it is out of the question.

So dear James it comes to me that there is no use in trying to free the minds of the people from superstition in the way that a good many Freethinkers are trying to do.

It seems to me that we must have industrial freedom before we can have full mental liberty for the majority of the people; for what good is all our argument through papers and periodicals, if the laboring people which constitute the majority of the population, have not the opportunity to investigate?

Socialism alone can give us full opportunity to read and investigate as we would not have to work 10 to 18 hours a day to earn the necessities of life.

I produce 5 to 10 times as much as my family and myself can consume each year, but after I have converted it into money which I am obliged to, to pay taxes, interest, and for machinery, clothing and groceries (which I cannot make), I can just about strike a balance at the end of the year, or a little short, if either way. If this doesn't prove that in some way some one or people are robbing me, what will? The price I pay for the finished articles that I must have are so far in excess of the labor cost of producing them that it absorbs the extra surplus that I raise to buy what I need of them. How can any one pretend to stand for "Justice," the slogan of Freethinkers, and not stand for Industrial Liberty, or Socialism? Give us industrial liberty and mental liberty is bound to follow. You now understand my position.—IRVIN HIATT.

#### Another Contribution Sent.

BENNINGTON, KANSAS.—I was moved by the pathetic letter of the needy comrade you published in the Blade of Aug. 23rd, 1908, and enclose P. O. money order for \$1.00 to help start the Emergency Fund in the interest of the aged and worn-out comrades in the glorious cause of Free-thought. Your suggestion to create such a fund is timely, and I trust that the comrades will awake to the exigencies of the case and relieve the Blade of the pressing pecuniary responsibility of meeting this most just and agreeable burden.—HENRY C. ROBERTS.

#### To Aid the Good Work.

LOCKPORT, N. Y.—Enclosed I hand you check for six dollars: Emergency Fund, \$2; Subscription to the Blade, \$2; Materialist Association, \$2. Very sorry that I could not attend the Association. Hope to do so at some future meeting. With many good wishes for the success of every en-

deavor in the line of advanced thought.—C. R. WOODWARD.

#### EMERGENCY FUND AGAIN.

LOS ANGELES.—Enclosed please find money order for one dollar for the emergency fund or for helping to send the Blade to them that are not able to pay, for it is certainly a great pleasure to those to read the Blade who believe in Common Sense and Reason.—I. H. FOWLER.

#### WANTS LIST OF BOOKS.

MARTING, W. VA.—Will you kindly inform me where I can purchase Keelers History of the Bible; Waites History of the Bible; Brandons Bible Researches Greenough's Origin of Supernatural Conceptions and approximately their cost.—JOHN O'BRIEN.

#### VALUE OF LOCALITY.

Soon after the Civil War, General Rufus Ingalls, U. S. A., visited a friend in the South. Taking a walk one morning he met a boy coming up from the river with a fine string of fish.

"What will you take for your fish?" asked the General.

"Thirty cents," was the reply.

"Thirty cents!" repeated the General in astonishment. "Why, if you were in New York you could get three dollars for them."

The boy looked critically at the officer for a moment and then said scornfully:

"Yes, sah; en I reckon if I had a bucket of water in hell I could get a million for it."

#### DOLLY'S BAPTISM.

A little girl once attended a Baptist immersion with her mother. She was much impressed by seeing the minister lower the people into the water, and on the way home was unusually silent. An hour later her mother saw the child take her whole family of dolls and make for a ditch in the farmyard. Curious to know what the youngster was going to do, she followed cautiously and arrived just in time to hear the child say, "Father, Son, and in the hole you goes," as she ducked the doll into a puddle.

#### SHEARING THE SHEEP.

A preacher famous for his begging abilities, was catechizing a Sunday school. When comparing to sheep he put the following question to the children: "What does the shepherd do for the sheep?" To the amusement of those present a small boy in the front pew piped out: "Shears them!"

## THE AX TO THE ROOT.

(Continued from Page 7.)

priest and preacher to blacken the character of the scientist and philosopher.

The true, the good and the beautiful, taught in our churches, are not religion, but moral, ethical and aesthetical forces, existing among all nations, in greater or lesser degree, independent of, prior to, and which will outlive any special religion. The latter are transient the former eternal as the universe.

Does the church favor goodness, virtue, mercy, charity, righteousness, honesty, purity, benevolence, good habits and character, music, art, poetry, science, and all that tends to health and happiness in life? All these good things will remain and be taught and fostered in our homes, schools and lecture halls with greatly increased facilities and energy, when religion, with its grotesque myths and fables, shall have vanished from the face of the earth.

Before these desirable reforms can be consummated, it is necessary that we place all our educational institutions upon a basis of facts. When delists devote the time, talent and wealth now squandered on superstition, to the useful and beautiful in life, we will soon have a happier humanity but—NO THEISTS. All will unite in the grand Order of Modern Materialists.

To Give Up Errors is no Loss, but a Gain.

In reply to the question: "What will you give us in place of our religion?" I will quote the beautiful words of Dr. Paul Carus:

"Inquire into truth, and the truth will guide you. Accept the truth and live it. for the truth is always good. If the truth appears evil to you or saddening, know that you have either misunderstood it or that you have not as yet fully made it your own. The truth must become the very essence of your being; it must be your own soul and your inmost self. Errors are a comfort to the erring only, not to the truth-loving; and to him alone whose mind hankers after error does truth appear stern. Surrender the errors that seem a comfort to you. To give up errors is no loss, but a gain. To learn the truth, even though it seems sad to you at first that is real gain. There is no consolation in errors, genuine consolation can be found in truth only. Trust in the truth, for there is no other saviour."

Ernest Renan, the renowned historian philosopher, relates the happiness he found in the church, and later, out of it, as follows:

"In childhood and early youth I tasted the purest joys of the believer, and from the bottom of my soul I say those joys were naught compared with those I feel in the pure contemplation of the beautiful and the impassioned pursuit of the true. I wish for all my brethren who have remained in orthodoxy, a peace comparable to that in

which I live since my struggles came to an end and the lulled tempest left in the midst of a great, still ocean; a sea without billows and without shoals, where there is no other star than reason and no other compass than one's own heart."

## Where Will You Spend Eternity?

Voltaire wrote: "When I am asked, if, after death, these faculties (personal attributes, mind, sensation, etc.) will exist, I am almost tempted to ask if the warbling or the nightingale will exist when the bird has been devoured by an eagle?"

So I ask: Can the form and functions of a human being continue to exist after the body is cremated and exists no more? Let spiritists or spirits themselves now explain what they are made of, or forbear telling us what they can do.

Herbert Spencer, in his last great work, after 50 years of most profound research, gives the result of his labors as follows:

"After contemplating the inscrutable relations between brain and consciousness, and finding that we can get no evidence of the existence of the last without the activity of the first, we seem obliged to relinquish the thought that consciousness continues after physical organization has become inactive."

"Will you die like a brute?" asks the priest scornfully. We are created and born "like a brute."

"Where will you spend eternity?" Where we were a hundred years ago, there we will be a hundred years hence—no yawning, seething Christian Hell for a vast majority of the human race!

From Col. Ingersoll I quote:

"Let the ghosts go—justice remains. Let them disappear—men and women and children are left. Let the monsters fade away—the world is here with its hills and seas and plains, with its seasons of smiles and frowns, its spring of leaf and bud, its summer of shade and flower and murmuring streams.

"The world remains with its winters and homes and friends; where grow and bloom the virtues of our race. All these are left; and music, with its sad and thrilling voice, and all there is of art and song and hope, and love and aspirations high.

"Man is greater than all phantoms. Humanity is greater than all creeds, than all books. Humanity is the great sea, and these creeds and books are but the waves of a day. Humanity is the sky, and these cogmas and theories are but the mists and clouds changing continually, destined to finally melt away.

"That which is founded upon slavery and fear and ignorance can not endure. In the religion of the future there will be men and women and children, all the aspirations of the soul, and all the tender humanities of

the heart. Let the ghosts go; we will worship them no more."

La Grange, Ill.

## JUST A DELAYED LETTER.

Sent in Greeting to the Recent Conventions, but Failed to Get There in Time.

(By Josephine K. Henry.)

Versailles, Ky., Sept. 4, 308.  
To the Buckeye Secular Union and Materialist Association; in Convention assembled at Canal Dover, Ohio—Greeting! and Greeting to the Workers for Mental Freedom, which alone can lead the human race to the Heights!

The battle between knowledge and belief is on in earnest.

"The Torch of Reason" challenges the "Banner of the Cross" and day by day the "Banner of the Cross" is retreating.

The "Rights of Man" by the Immortal Thomas Paine, is now the political constitution of Christendom, and the "Age of Reason" by the Immortal Thomas Paine, is the growing constitution of Christianity. Human society is now, more than in any past age, rejecting the codes, creeds and canons of self-appointed censors. Orthodoxy is today hanging its head in shame because it hurt a Bruno, and persecuted and maligned a Voltaire, a Paine, and an Ingersoll. Freethought is leading humanity from the bogs and fens of superstition to the heights of Reason: Freethought has no priests or prophets; it has thinkers, and its temple is the universe.

Freethought is that philosophy of nature that is not a doctrine but a destiny.

The grandeur of this cause should inspire every lover of Truth and Liberty with courage and hope. Clasp hands with the workers now assembled at Canal Dover, let us renew our allegiance to the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action.

Extending fraternal greetings, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

JOSEPHINE K. HENRY.

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